

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-12 AGRE-00 AID-05 CEA-01
CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DLOS-09 DODE-00
DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 SOE-02 DOE-15 FMC-01 TRSE-00
H-01 INR-10 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 NSF-01 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 OIC-02 /148 W
-----014688 040432Z/21

R 040019Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 WELLINGTON 02259

CINCPAC FOR HICOMTERPACIS

GENEVA FOR LOS DELEGATION

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EFIS, PLOS
SUBJECT: SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL FISHERIES AGENCY

REF: CANBERRA 3301

1. SUMMARY: FISHERIES TEAM MET 2 MAY WITH GNZ TEAM
TO DISCUSS SPRFA. GNZ CONCERNED THAT SPRFA EFFORT MAY
BE SIDETRACKED BY GPNG AND FIJIAN POSITION, AND BELIEVES
SPEC MEETING NOW SCHEDULED FOR 8-10 MAY WILL
DETERMINE FUTURE COURSE OF NEGOTIATION. DECISION AS TO
WHETHER CHRIS BEEBE WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR JUNE
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SESSION WILL BE TAKEN AFTER 8-10 MAY MEETING. GNZ
EXPLORED IN DETAIL U.S. LEGISLATION IMPACTING ON TUNA
FISHING, AND OBVIOUSLY CONCERNED THAT IF NEGOTIATIONS
STALL, GNZ BE ABLE TO AVOID DIFFICULTIES WITH U.S. ON
ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

2. TEAM MET WITH GNZ TEAM HEADED BY PAUL COTTON, HEAD

OF PACIFIC DIVISION, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND INCLUDING TERRANCE O'BRIEN, ECONOMIC DIVISION HEAD, COLIN KEATING, LEGAL DIVISION, AND A REPRESENTATIVE OF PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE. GNZ IS CONCERNED THAT SPRFA EFFORT MAY BECOME BOGGED DOWN AS A RESULT OF NEW PNG AND FIJIAN PROPOSALS. COTTON NOTED THAT AT SUVA MEETING FIJI DID NOT TAKE AS ACTIVE A ROLE AS WOULD HAVE BEEN EXPECTED, AND THAT ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS FIJIAN REPRESENTATIVE "ASKED SOME VERY DIFFICULT QUESTIONS WHICH WERE NEVER ANSWERED". IN COTTON'S OPINION, INDICATIONS WERE PRESENT THAT FIJI WAS NOT FULLY ON BOARD, AND SOUTH PACIFIC NATIONS SHOULD HAVE REALIZED GOF WOULD QUESTION EFFORT AT SOME POINT. GNZ BELIEVES SPEC MEETING NOW SCHEDULED FOR 8-10 MAY WILL BE VERY IMPORTANT IN SETTING TONE FOR REGULAR 5-10 JUNE NEGOTIATING ROUND. HE STATED THAT GNZ WOULD ASSESS RESULTS OF SPEC MEETING BEFORE DECIDING WHETHER TO MAKE CHRIS BEEBE AVAILABLE FOR JUNE ROUND. IF IT APPEARS PROGRESS WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE AT JUNE MEETING, GNZ WILL PROBABLY TRY TO TURN MEETING INTO INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS, OR HAVE IT POSTPONED. COTTON ASKED IF U.S. COULD ATTEND A MEETING DESIGNED TO INFORMALLY EXPLORE IDEAS, WITH VERY SMALL DELEGATIONS. HE IS OF OPINION THAT ANOTHER SUVA-TYPE ROUND WITH LARGE DELEGATIONS AND A FORMAL STRUCTURE WHICH FAILED TO PRODUCE PROGRESS WOULD BE DAMAGING TO EFFORT. ON OTHER HAND, AN INFORMAL SESSION

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MIGHT HAVE BETTER CHANCE OF SUCCESS, AND CONSEQUENCES OF NON-PRODUCTIVE SESSION WOULD NOT BE AS GREAT. TEAM WAS NONCOMMittal ON POINT, BUT INDICATED THAT CANCELLATION OF JUNE MEETING WOULD BE CAUSE FOR CONCERN, AND WE WERE WILLING TO CONSIDER SMALL INFORMAL MEETING IF IT WOULD MOVE EFFORT FORWARD.

3. GNZ VERY INTERESTED IN PROVISIONS OF U.S. LEGISLATION PERTAINING TO TUNA FISHING FOR TWO REASONS. FIRST, THEY ARE SEEKING SOLUTION TO JURIDICAL PROBLEM IN SPRFA CONTEXT, AND ANXIOUS TO DEVISE FORMULA WHICH WILL SATISFY U.S. CONCERNs AND AT SAME TIME BE ACCEPTABLE TO PNG AND OTHERS. THEY BELIEVE THAT ISSUE WILL IN FACT BE DECIDED BY A POLITICAL DECISION, BUT THAT PRACTICAL SOLUTION MUST BE FOUND WHICH ALLOWS PNG AND OTHERS TO ACCEPT U.S. PARTICIPATION. U.S. MENTIONED IDEA OF SINGLE TREATY ESTABLISHING TWO ORGANIZATIONS, AS DISCUSSED WITH GOA (REFTEL). GNZ EXPRESSED OPINION THAT SUCH AN APPROACH MIGHT OFFER A WORKABLE SOLUTION.

4. A SECOND CONCERN RELATES TO U.S./GNZ BILATERAL

ARRANGEMENTS. THE VOYAGER INCIDENT FRIGHTENED THEM, AND THEY APPEAR ANXIOUS TO AVOID A REPEAT. O'BRIEN STATED THAT GNZ HAD COMPETENCE TO ISSUE LICENSES WITHOUT A FORMAL GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT AGREEMENT, AND THAT CURRENT CHARTER ARRANGEMENT COULD BE EXTENDED TO COVER OTHER VESSELS AS WELL. GNZ EXPLORED WHETHER ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERIM AGENCY COULD MEET U.S. NEEDS AND AVOID APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS. THEY STATED THAT GILBERTS HAD BEEN APPROACHED BY JAPANESE TO NEGOTIATE FISHING RIGHTS, AND HAD REQUESTED ASSISTANCE FROM SPEC. THIS DEVELOPMENT LEADS GNZ TO BELIEVE INTERIM AGENCY SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, IN ORDER TO PROVIDE MECHANISM FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION, PRIOR TO SPRFA

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BECOMING FUNCTIONAL. THEY WERE HOPEFUL THAT SOMEHOW INTERIM AGENCY MIGHT SERVE TO FORESTALL PROBLEMS WITH U.S. LEGISLATION. TEAM EXPLAINED THAT AS LEGAL MATTER THIS SOLUTION FELL SHORT, BUT THAT IF NEGOTIATIONS WERE PROGRESSING OR PERHAPS COMPLETED, U.S. AND SOUTH PACIFIC NATIONS MIGHT BE ABLE TO USE INTERIM AGENCY AS A MECHANISM FOR MUTUAL RESTRAINT PENDING FULL OPERATION OF SPRFA.

5. GNZ OFFICIALS MADE VERY STRONG REPRESENTATIONS FOR TEAM TO VISIT WESTERN SAMOA. THEY POINTED OUT THAT SAMOAN DELEGATION TO SUVA MEETING WAS STRONGEST SUPPORTER OF U.S., AND THAT PM HAD GONE ON RECORD NUMEROUS TIMES IN THIS REGARD, INCLUDING PRIVATE COMMUNICATIONS TO PM SOMARE OF PNG. FOR TEAM TO TOUR AREA WITHOUT VISITING APIA WOULD, IN GNZ OPINION, CONFIDENTIAL

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BE TAKEN AS AN AFFRONT. IN ADDITION, COTTON STATED THAT PM SOMARE SCHEDULED TO VISIT APIA IN EARLY JUNE, AND THIS WOULD BE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY FOR SAMOAN PM TUPUOLA EFTI TO RAISE ISSUE DIRECTLY. COMMENT: TEAM ASSESSMENT IS THAT GNZ ANXIOUS FOR WESTERN SAMOANS TO CONTINUE TO TAKE STRONG STAND IN FAVOR OF U.S. POSITIONS, THEREBY ENABLING GNZ TO PLAY ROLE OF COMPROMISER. THIS STRATEGY SEEMS SOUND TO US. IN ADDITION, AMBASSADOR IS OF OPINION THAT TEAM VISIT TO TONGA WILL PAY DIVIDENDS IN DEBATES ON SUBJECT WITHIN FORUM, AND STRONGLY URGED TEAM TO VISIT THERE. AS NOTED SEPTEL, TEAM HAS MADE ARRANGEMENTS TO VISIT BOTH APIA AND TONGA, AND EMBASSY WELLINGTON HAS ARRANGED FOR CONSULTATIONS. SELDEN

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